



Heinz ★ Highland Drive ★ University Drive

# Working *Together*

Issue Twelve

Winter 2003



VAPHS Employees  
Called to Duty —  
See Pages 4 & 5



# A Message from the Director

## Dear Fellow Employees, Volunteers, Veterans and Friends of the VAPHS,

In this winter issue of our Working Together publication, we recognize and pay tribute to our VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System employees who have been called to active military duty since the tragic and unfortunate events of September 11, 2001. I am extremely proud of our staff members who have made great personal sacrifices to serve their country with pride and honor during these difficult times for our great nation as well as the world.



Warren Park



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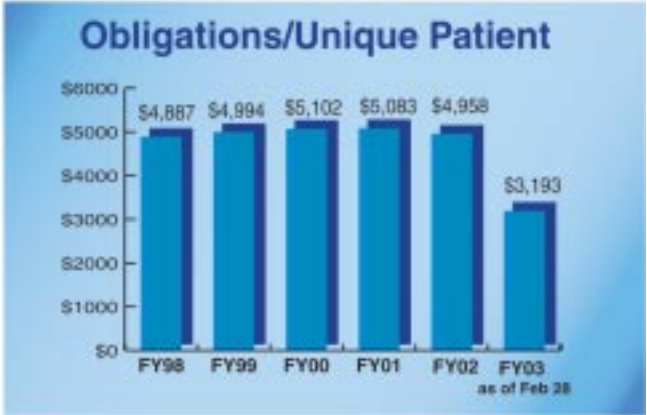
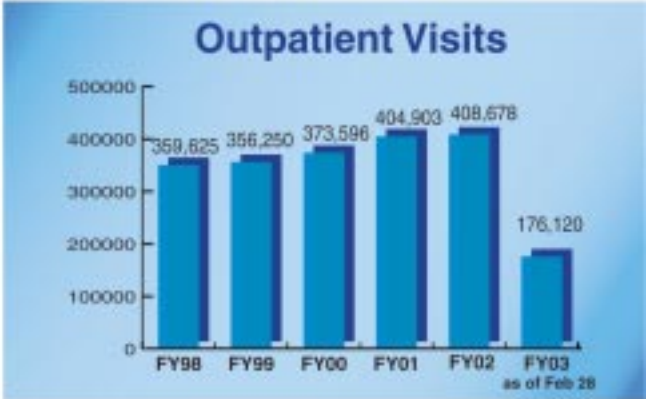
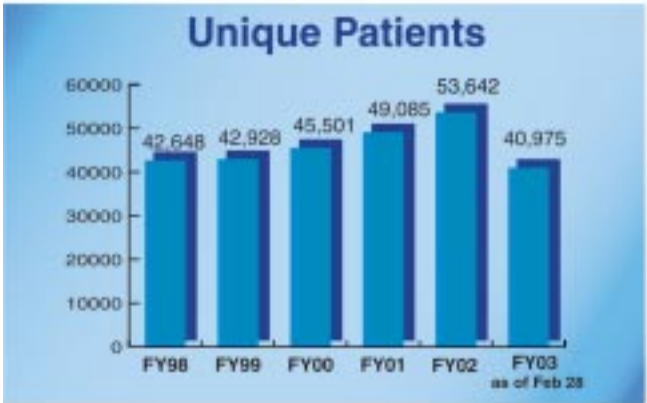
As of March 31, 2003, a total of 866 VA personnel nationwide have been activated and mobilized for military service. Of these, 768 are Veterans Health Administration (VHA) employees. Within VHA, the top five occupations most affected by the mobilization are: staff nurses (108); police officers (62); veteran's service representatives (51); licensed practical nurses (48); and physicians (45).

On behalf of all our staff, patients and volunteers I want to express my sincere appreciation to our staff members who have unselfishly put their personal lives; as well as, careers on hold to serve our great nation and to assist in preserving the freedom that we all enjoy as Americans.

This issue of Working Together will also feature articles on the implementation of Advanced Tray Delivery, National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans, Video's for Veterans campaign, appointment of our new Associate Director for Site Operations, and our "Performance Vital Signs". It also spotlights the many outstanding achievements and awards that our staff have received in the past quarter.

Michael E. Moreland  
Director  
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System

# Performance Vital Signs



**Quality Performance:**  
FY 00 = 71%  
FY 01 = **Exceptional!**  
FY 02 = 100% of Measures = **Fully Successful or Better!**  
FY 03 = 5 of 6 Clinical Interventions = **Fully Successful or Better!**



## Meal Delivery with UNITRON 5



Nutrition and Food Service will be implementing a new tray system. It has been perfected to ensure that food will be at the right temperature every time. Food will be colorful, flavorful and nutritious!

The new tray delivery system begins at University Drive and Highland Drive in May.

Trays will have a new look as shown below. The hot foods are on one side and the cold foods on the other.



Warren Park





Alvin Mixon



# Our Guard a Called Since



Richard Norman



Edward Dickerson



Roberta Butler



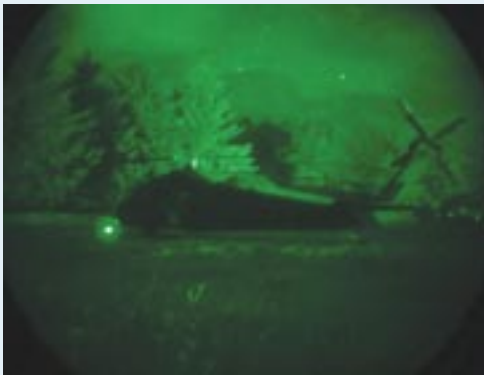
Eric Schroeder



Richard Laufer



Stephanie Wright



Robert Bolick



# and Reservists to Duty e 9/11



William Laitinen



Willie Bennett



Francis Hasson



Olester McLain



Dennis Sedlack



Karen Harrell

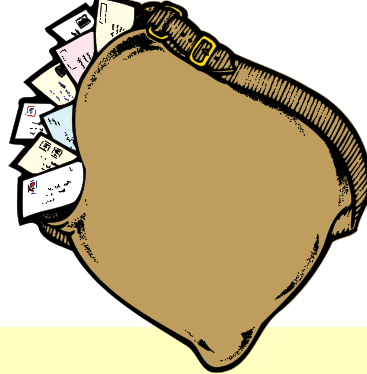


Jonathan Stroud



*Not shown:*  
Karl Engwer  
Jeffrey W. Green  
Nicholas Hryadil, Jr.  
Roseanne McDermot  
Warren Park  
Christer Smith  
Edwin B. Watkins  
Michael D. Wilson

# Mail Bag



Dear Mr. Barilich:

I'm writing this letter because I feel the personnel that my husband, and my family and I interacted with during his time at the VA Hospice were truly outstanding people worthy of recognition for their efforts, not only for their medical expertise but also in their compassionate, respectful treatment of us all.

My husband, Joseph E. Smiller, was in the Aspinwall Progressive Care Center, ward 3-North. He had only been in the center for a day and one half (October 9-10, 2002) when he passed away, but my family and I are deeply grateful that he was able to have the level of care that he needed for his final hours.

Mr. Don Maus was extremely efficient and helpful and yet very sympathetic and kind to us.

The nurses were wonderful - we regret that we do not know the names of all of the nurses who attended to my husband's needs throughout the night and day but we deeply appreciate everything that they did. We also really appreciated that they showed us (the family) kindnesses too, since we were very exhausted because my husband had been home for six days prior to coming to the hospice and we had been trying very hard to see to his needs but unfortunately had no real nursing training or skills.

I'm very grateful to the hospice staff that thanks to their help and care I was able to be at my husband's side when he passed away and find great comfort in the fact that his last moments were made very beautiful by a woman from the music therapy department who played the mandolin and then led us in prayer for him. Music was always one of his great loves - he took his last breath as she exited his room.

All the people we interacted with at the Hospice were extraordinarily efficient and nice. They have our deepest appreciation and respect and I hope you will convey our feelings to them.

Sincerely,  
Dolores Smiller

Mr. Moreland,

Recently I was a patient at the VA facility at University Drive in Oakland. I would like to take a few moments to comment on the treatment I received as a patient at this facility. When something is broken, we must notify the proper authority, so that the problem can be repaired. When something is working well, we too, must notify the proper authority so the employee can receive a job well done and a thank you. My stay at the facility, as well as my treatment at the out patient orthopedic care unit was Outstanding.

I cannot comment enough about the care and treatment that I received from Nurse Anita Steinmiller and Nurse Marie Krugle. As a veteran it made me feel great to see that the facility is staffed with professional caring people like these two nurses. My problem was taken care of and the nurses made me feel like a friend. Please convey my sincere appreciation and thank you to these two wonderful nurses. The Veterans Hospital is served well by nurses of this caliber.

Sincerely,  
Robert H. Gorsuch, Jr.

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you regarding your services at the VA Medical Center, Highland. My husband Tom and I both were in the Navy and we are currently patients of Dr. Hubicz who has taken care of us for three years. We are really happy to tell you that she is the best doctor there. We are retired and it's to our benefit that we have a caring and wonderful doctor to take care of us. She takes out interests to heart and gives us her complete attention when we go there for our visits.

I just want you to know that if all the staff were as good as her, your job would be easier! My compliments to you all. It's a great Center and I hope you will take the time to pat Dr. Hubicz on the back when you see her! She deserves a medal!

Sincerely,  
Thomas and Mildred Kraus

Dear Sirs,

My father, Clarence H. Negley was in the VA hospital on 12/4/2002 for a colonoscopy for routine screening due to a family history of this disease.

In this busy world we live in, many times we do not take the time to acknowledge when someone does something good, unfortunately, we only seem to bear the bad. We hope you find this letter a refreshing change.

From entering the parking lot, you have very pleasant folks parking cars for our Veterans. Upon entering the hospital the security is quite apparent and very welcome. At the 9<sup>th</sup> floor my father was admitted and his nurse for this procedure, Leslie Koeper was as kind, compassionate and professional as I believe nurses should be. Shame is that all nurses could not garner her concern for their patients. We are not all just a number or an illness. When my Father thanked her for her kindness, she responded with, "No... thank you Mr. Negley, this hospital is in appreciation of you and all Veterans". How kind!

On a final note, Dr. Issacson performed the colonoscopy on my father. My Dad said he felt Dr. Issacson to be very thorough, pleasant and has a perfect sense of humor, considering the nature of this procedure and succeeded in putting him at ease.

On behalf of my father, we thank everyone at the VA Hospital and are very happy to have such a fine facility to care for our Veterans.

Sincerely,  
Gail Houston

# Spotlight On

*Associate Director  
for Site Operations*

Pat  
Nealon



Warren Park

Ms. Patricia Nealon was recently appointed as the Associate Director for Site Operations at the VAPHS. Ms. Nealon will also continue to serve as the Site Manager for the Highland Drive Division and Vice President of Community Based Care. Ms. Nealon began her career at the VA Medical Center Highland Drive as a clinical Social Worker and has held numerous clinical and administrative positions at the VA Pittsburgh. She holds a B.A. from the University of Pittsburgh and an MSW from Tulane University. Ms. Nealon is married and has two grown children.

## Congratulations

*Employees with 20 years or more of service!*

The employees listed have reached a benchmark in their years of government service during the period **October - December 2002.**

Name	Service Line	Years
Lana J. Couzzens	Primary Care	30
Larry J. Drill	Behavioral Health	30
Shirley A. Gottron	Information Management	30
James J. Mullen	Facilities Management	30
Frederick G. Manners	Clinical Support	30
LaChrisha Richardson	Facilities Management	30
Robert J. Sloma	Facilities Management	30
Dorothy M. Stanfield	Medical Specialty	30
Marilyn F. Cox	Critical Care	25
Deborah L. Mitchum	Primary Care	25
Thomas R. Comerford	Patient Care Services	20
Mary L. Deriso	Facilities Management	20
Beverly A. Ditchko	Geriatrics & Extended Care	20
John G. Prelich	Surgical Specialty	20
Dana D. Restori	Facilities Management	20
Douglas R. Seskey	Facilities Management	20
Jeanie R. West	Clinical Support	20





# Videos for Vets Campaign

Congresswoman Melissa Hart presents video tapes to VAPHS libraries. The tapes were donated by members of the Pittsburgh community for our hospitalized veterans to enjoy.



## National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans, February 14, 2003



Warren Park, Erin Klugh & Glenn Hangard

## A Family Tradition— Over 90 Years of Service



### Mission

The mission of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System is to care for America’s veterans; providing excellent health care, training their future providers, and advancing medical knowledge through research.

### Vision

Our shared vision is to strive for excellence in everything we do, working together to exceed the expectations of our veterans.

Lana J. Couzzens, RN, Primary Care Service Line, shown with Associate Director Terry Gerigk and Dr. David MacPherson, Vice President, Primary Care, recently celebrated 30 years of service at the VAPHS. Lana’s mother and father, shown in the above photo, each also had 30 years service at University Drive. Lana and her parents have over 90 years of government service — all in the same building!

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